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Book Review: Vehicle Traffic Law

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BOOK REVIEWS

VEHICLE TRAFFIC LAW. By Edward C. Fisher. Evanston, Illinois: Traffic Institute, Northwestern University, 1961. Pp. 468. \$10.

More Americans are affected each year by our traffic laws and regulations than all other city and state laws combined. However, authoritative aids in interpreting and understanding the nation's traffic laws are sparse.

Vehicle Traffic Law by Edward C. Fisher, associate counsel of the Traffic Institute, and former judge of the Municipal Court of Lincoln, Nebraska, is the first complete treatise covering a thorough digest and review of existing traffic laws and regulations. In no other one-volume work can one find ready references, precedents, and case citations interpreting the provisions of the uniform vehicle code. The code, with local variations, forms the great body of traffic laws and regulations throughout the country.

Judge Fisher is all too modest when he states in the preface, "This book represents an effort to present the subject of vehicle regulation through legislative action and judicial interpretation. The aim has been to place these in proper perspective, emphasizing their purpose and place against a background of progress in the American way of transportation and movement by vehicles as controlling forces in our society and mode of life."

This book accomplishes much more than the stated aim and purposes of the author. It provides a clear and lucid, but authoritative, guide to the great number in our population who are called upon to interpret and enforce our traffic laws. While setting forth numerous references to other works and research materials, this book is complete within itself and review of other materials is scarcely necessary.

In authoring this book, Judge Fisher has filled a long-neglected need in the legal profession. *Vehicle Traffic Law* is certain to become a keystone and commanding influence in legal and traffic safety circles. The book will serve to dispel much of the uncertainty and misunderstandings existing in the minds of motorists, but more especially, judges and attorneys, as well as enforcement officers, with respect to the application and true meaning of our traffic regulations. Not only in criminal prosecutions for violations of traffic laws is this book useful, but those interested in civil litigation and accident causation and liability will find it to be of extreme value. Our legislators, in particular, will benefit from its publication and will be afforded an excellent working tool to discharge their life-saving responsibilities in promulgating workable, equitable and constitutional traffic laws. To the average reader, the book will prove informative and interesting.

The technique utilized by the author makes the review of traffic laws and court decisions all the more meaningful. The first five chapters cover the background, development, purpose of, and necessity for traffic laws. The remaining fifteen chapters contain a complete treatment of the legal and constitutional aspects of traffic engineering, legislative enactments, enforcement, licensing

and revocation of licenses, jurisdiction, prosecution, penalization and punishment of traffic offenses. Judge Fisher has included in his book every conceivable phase of our existing traffic laws and regulations. The readable index prompts quick reference.

The author does not pretend to present philosophical or abstract complexities of traffic safety; but instead, he has written a workable practitioner's manual.

Serving as a municipal judge of Lincoln, Nebraska for fourteen years and as Associate Counsel of the Traffic Institute, Northwestern University, for over ten years, Judge Fisher is eminently qualified to author this far-reaching treatise. He has written other books and articles on related subjects. In this most recent work, he has displayed a keen insight into legal, procedural, and constitutional problems faced daily by persons actively concerned with the various aspects of traffic supervision, licensing, enforcement and control.

Vehicle Traffic Law, eight years in preparation, reflects the articulate product of a truly outstanding and dedicated student of the law. From a casual reading, it is apparent that Judge Fisher possesses one of the keenest legal minds in this field in the country today. Trained or untrained, the reader will find this book an aid in understanding the many traffic laws governing the great field of human activity—driving. I commend *Vehicle Traffic Law* highly.

Sherman G. Finesilver*

COLORADO NEGLIGENCE DIGEST. By Richard D. Hall.¹ 1961. Pp. 129. \$10.30.²

This book is a revised successor to Mr. Hall's Colorado Accident Law Digest published in 1950 (now out of print). Your reviewer had the pleasure of writing a book review of the 1950 work³ and there had nothing but high praise for the original book. The new work is even better than its predecessor.

The author has digested all of the Colorado negligence cases reported since 1919, and some selected negligence cases decided prior to that date. In classifying the cases, he has again used what may be described as the "functional approach," i.e., grouping the cases by fact patterns. For instance, Chapter I, entitled "Negligent Operation of Motor Vehicles," is divided into eight subchapters, based upon the fact patterns of accidents. To illustrate: three of such subchapters are entitled "Two Car—Rear End," "Two car—Left Turn" and "Two Car—Head On."

The book contains eight chapters of classified negligence cases, three appendices and a table of cases. The digests of the cases are very brief. The obvious intention of the author is to save the time of the researcher.

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² University of Denver Bookstore, 1825 South York, Denver 10, Colorado.

³ 28 DICTA 118 (March, 1951).